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DEPT ALSO PASS TO DEPT OF LABOR FOR MICHAL MURPHY, SUDHA HALEY,
PATRICK WHITE AND MAUREEN PETTIS

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: SUCCESSFUL WORKSHOP ON TIP AND CHILD SEX TOURISM IN KENYA'S
COASTAL DISTRICTS

¶1. Summary: SOLWODI's April 11-13 workshop on trafficking and child sex tourism, funded through a G/TIP project, was very effective in building Coast Province activists' capacity and encouraging the community to discuss these sensitive issues. Labor Officer recommends further use of the participatory theater techniques used by the workshop facilitators. End summary.

SOLWODI-Mijikenda Workshop

¶2. The Mijikenda Girl Child Organization held an April 11-13 Capacity Building Workshop for about 15 of its members and community activists from Kwale, Mombasa, Kilifi, and Malindi Districts on "Interventions and Coping Skills in Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)" at the Kikambala Childrens' Home. Miji Kenda is the Swahili name for the nine major sub tribes of the Coast region. The goal was for participants to learn about trafficking and child sex tourism (CST), and learn effective techniques for their community outreach work. The District Officer and local Assistant Chief officiated in some of the sessions. The workshop discussed the laws regarding CST and the available legal resources, and identified networking opportunities and partners, but did not draft an Action Plan as originally scheduled.

¶3. The workshop was funded by the NGO Solidarity with Women in Distress (SOLWODI), under a project funded by G/TIP to address TIP in Coast Province. The SOLWODI representative briefed the group on trafficking and its project to rescue sex workers and trafficking victims, counsel them, arrange education or vocational training, and either return them to their homes, or resettle them. She described how SOLWODI organized a football team and drama club to build rescued victims' esteem, and uses the matches and performances to build community awareness.

Widespread Lack of Awareness of TIP

¶4. The participants agreed that, because of the general lack of awareness, it is often difficult to identify trafficking victims. Parents who offer their children to work as domestics and the relatives who exploit the children do not realize they are traffickers, and children take the situation as normal. They said the police treat sex workers, even children, as criminals. TIP is big business, and some traffickers are powerful. Victims fear retribution if they come forward and doubt the police will protect them.

Community Faces Many Related Problems

¶5. The cases cited by the participants demonstrated that the community views HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, child defilement, and migration to the Middle East as bigger problems than TIP. With many girls and women (and increasing numbers of boys) driven by poverty, negligent parents or spouses, and unemployment to become commercial sex workers in tourism areas, HIV/AIDS has struck many

households and created many orphans, increasing the strain on extended families. Sexual abuse of children (defilement), usually by relatives or neighbors, is increasing, leaving families and children traumatized and sometimes infected with HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. Seeking high income jobs, many Muslim people migrate to the Middle East rather than work in the Coast hotels. Their absence leaves their families more vulnerable to child abuse, CST and TIP, but they often return after years of work with meager returns, feeling bitter and ashamed. The group agreed that Kenyan embassies have a reputation of being unhelpful to Kenyans exploited overseas.

Comment

16. The Labor Officer attended two days of the workshop, and found the participatory theater techniques used by the Amani Peoples Theatre facilitators to be very effective for explaining trafficking, highlighting its effect on the community, encouraging the community to discuss its problems and overcome its traditional extreme reticence about issues involving sex. The performances presented to a small group of local residents stimulated them into a frank discussion (laced with much embarrassed laughter) of the sensitive issues involved in trafficking and child sex tourism, and ways the community could address the problems. Labor Officer recommends further use of this technique, both for training and for public outreach.

RANNEBERGER